

Message Text

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ACTION AGRE-00

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 SP-02 USIA-15 AID-05 EB-08 NSC-05

TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06 LAB-04 SIL-01

PA-02 PRS-01 /092 W

-----240924 024498 /10

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5666

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DEPT PASS AGRICULTURE FOR HUME, FAS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EPAP

SUBJECT: CITRUS FUNGICIDES/ORANGE QUOTA/CHERRIES

FOLLOWING ARTICLE APPEARED IN THIS MORNING'S EDITION OF JAPAN TIMES HEADLINED /BAN ON IMPORTS OF OPP-TREATED U.S. CITRUS WILL BE REMOVED" MAF OFFICIAL HAD NO SUBSTANTIAL COMMENT OTHER THAN HE "SMELL'S A GOOD DIRECTION" ON CITRUS OPP.

THE GOVERNMENT WILL LIFT A BAN ON IMPORTS OF U.S. LEMONS AND GRAPEFRUITS TREATED WITH THE CONTROVERSIAL ANTISEPTIC ORTHO-PHENYLPHENOL (OPP) WHEN IT COMPLETES DUE PROCEDURE. AGRICULTURE-FORESTRY MINISTRY SOURCES SAID WEDNESDAY. (2/22)

THE SOURCE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO INTENTION TO EXPAND JAPAN'S IMPORT QUOTA FOR AMERICAN ORANGES OR TO LIFT A BAN ON IMPORTS OF CHERRIES FROM THE U.S.

IMPORTS OF U.S.CHERRIES HAVE BEEN BANNED BECAUSE OF THE FEAR

THAT THEY MAY BE INFESTED WITH CODLING MOTHS.

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO LIFT THE BAN ON OPP-TREATED U.S. CITRUS FRUITS BECAUSE THE PLANNED SUMMIT BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER TAKEO FUKUDA AND PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER IS DRAWING NEAR.

THE SO-CALLED "LEMON WAR" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES CAME TO THE FORE IN 1975 WHEN JAPAN DETECTED OPP ON LEMONS IMPORTED FROM AMERICA AND QUICKLY DETERMINED THE SUBSTANCE TO BE HARM-

FUL TO HUMAN HEALTH.

ACCORDINGLY, THE MINISTRY BANNED THE IMPORT OF GRAPEFRUITS, LEMONS AND ORANGES TREATED WITH OPP.

THE JAPANESE ACTION, HOWEVER, DREW STRONG CRITICISM FROM THE UNITED STATES WHICH REGARDED THE JAPANESE BAN ON THOSE OPP-TREATED FRUITS AS A NON-TARIFF BARRIER. THE U.S. ARGUED THAT ALL COUNTRIES OTHER THAN JAPAN ALLOWED THE USE OF THE ANTISEPTIC.

THE U.S. SIDE LATER SUBMITTED DATA PROVING THE SAFETY OF OPP TO THE HEALTH AND WELFARE MINISTRY, AND ENTRUSTED AN INVESTIGATION THROUGH JAPANESE IMPORTERS WITH THE INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY ON THE HEREDITARY TOXICITY, THE FOCAL POINT AT ISSUE.

THE INSTITUTE REPORTED LAST YEAR END THAT THE OPP WAS NOT HARMFUL. THE INSTITUTE IS AN OFFSHOOT OF THE AGRICULTURE-FORESTRY MINISTRY.

UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE MINISTRY REVEALED ITS INTENTION TO APPROVE OPP USE SOONER OR LATER AFTER CONSULTING WITH THE FOOD SANITATION INVESTIGATION COUNCIL, AN ADVISORY ORGAN

TO THE HEALTH AND WELFARE MINISTER.

BUT THE AGRICULTURE-FORESTRY MINISTRY SAID THAT THERE WOULD BE NO DRASTIC INCREASE IN IMPORTS OF GRAPEFRUITS AND LEMONS IN UNCLASSIFIED

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SPITE OF THE IMPENDING APPROVAL OF OPP USE. THIS IS BECAUSE THEIR IMPORTS HAVE BEEN STABLE, REACHING 150,000 TONS FOR GRAPEFRUITS AND 90,000 TONS FOR LEMONS A YEAR.

THE MINISTRY ALSO SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO PRESSURE FROM THE U.S. TO EXPAND IMPORT QUOTAS FOR ORANGES, SET AT 22,000 TONS

A YEAR FOR THE PAST FOUR YEARS.

THE U.S. HAS ALSO BEEN SEEKING JAPAN'S LIFTING OF ITS BAN ON THE IMPORT OF CHERRIES ON THE GROUND THAT THE U.S. HAS BEEN DEVELOPING TECHNOLOGY TO ERADICATE CODLING MOTHS ON THE CHERRIES.

THE MINISTRY SAID THAT IT WOULD TAKE TIME TO REACH A CONCLUSION ON THE TECHNOLOGY, TO BE PUT UNDER STUDY SOON.

IT IS ALSO CONTEMPLATING CARRYING OUT IMPORT OF THE CHERRIES BY AVOIDING THE PEAK PERIOD IN DOMESTIC PRODUCTION THAT COMES

IN JUNE."
SHOESMITH

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
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Executive Order: N/A
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